



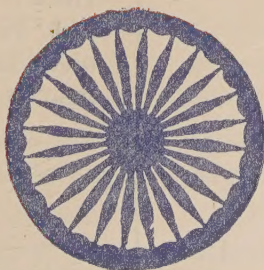
# The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● AUGUST 1987

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**Opinions expressed by contributors do not commit the C.S.I**

### The South India CHURCHMAN

*The Magazine of the Church of South India*  
**AUGUST 1987**

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## 25 Years Ago!

The Department on the laity has been drawn by its work to consider not merely what the church ought to be doing, but what the church is. We have come to see that the whole church shares Christ's ministry in the world and that the effective exercise of this ministry must largely be by church members, when they are dispersed in the life of the world. As it was said in Evanston: 'The real battles of faith today are being fought in factories, shops, offices and farms, in political parties and government agencies, in countless homes, in the press, radio and television, in the relationship of nations: Very often it is said that the Church should, 'go into these spheres,' but the fact is that the church is already in these spheres in the persons of its laity. There is nothing new in this connection—for our Lord said 'Ye are the salt of the earth...'—but it is a truth which has been obscured over many periods of the church's life.

—South India Churchman 1957.

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*Hon. Business Manager*

# Forty Years of Free India



*We have come a long way! Forty years of our being together is no small act. In spite of fear, suspicion and hatred, fanned by wild rumours which culminated in several pitched battles of Civil-War, nature over issues like language, separate statehood, we are still one and forging ahead in many fields. One could see God's mighty hand in leading us and keeping us intact. Thank God for our motherland.*

*At the same time we need to ponder over the mind boggling issues and take stock of the situation in which today's India is placed.*

*The Indian Political scenario has never been so murky, shaky and distorted as it is now. People's faith in the political leaders has been shattered beyond repair. People are losing confidence in political leaders. The performance of the established order is unable to match the urges of the people and the aspirations they have cherished. The periodic sound and fury that our leaders make at enormous cost to the nation made many observers cynical. Adding to this confused state of affairs the media chooses to spread, more often than not, the sensational untruths. Instead of destroying superstition, casteism, regionalism, the media whether T.V. or papers, have been catering to the banal interest of people. In the long run this attitude will certainly help destabilising the country. There are many soul searching issues which need immediate attention and focus and the potential danger of such ought to be communicated.*

*The prolonged violence, communalism, terrorism are the grim reminders of the substantial presence of bad and anti-national elements bent upon indulging in dangerous mischief and serious crime. The ease with which they are able to*

*inflame the passions of normally reasonable men and women and to outwit the administration in their design to foment violence is a sad reflection on the so called efforts at fostering secularism and unity.*

*So much has been said and written about the subject that there is little scope for fresh thinking. What is needed is a strong political will—primarily by the government and there by the people, that is activated not merely at the time of crisis but also during periods of peace and normality on a systematic and sustained basis. In the past communal holocaust used to be triggered by trivialities but now a new dimension is added. As someone has put it, the communal poison has percolated into the psyche of the people, it has swayed the minds and hearts of vast sections of the population, especially in the urban areas. It has almost become an accepted norm.*

*The academic exercises in the forums have been bogged down in hair-splitting over generalities such as the definition of communalism. The discussions, no doubt, have thrown up some ideas and guidelines for the political elite—but failures at the implementation level had been glaring. Unfortunately, the communal forces seem to be more active and their propaganda comes through more strongly than the messages of religious bodies who advocate peaceful coexistence. With all the missionary and evangelistic force we have at our disposal we couldn't contain any such riots nor there has been any serious attempt on our part to educate people, convincingly, to opt for universal brotherhood.*

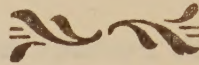
*Atrocities on Harijans and women go unabated. The gruesome killings of Harijans by upper caste people in*

Neerukonda A.P. recently (July 15) rocked the lush and peaceful village and sent shock waves throughout the state. Fear psychosis has gripped Harijans as they fear for their safety. It is said a gang of more than 250 assailants swooped on the Harijanawada and raided the houses of Harijans, pouncing upon them with vengeance and attacked them with sticks, axes and other weapons to ensure that lives were lost—in the Karamchedu pattern. Long ago Dr. Ambedkar had observed, '... I have no homeland. How can I call this land my own and this religion my own wherein we are treated worse than cats and dogs? No

self-respecting untouchable will be proud of this land...'. People are frustrated and would say the same even today. The most important point of Jesus of Nazareth manifesto (Lk. 4 : 18) is, 'the downtrodden shall be freed from their oppressors...' (Living Bible).

The Church cannot afford to be a silent spectator, shirking its responsibilities. It should play its role in facilitating the integration of the lowest rung of the society into a new community with a new hope in Jesus Christ who had reconciled such a troubled, warring and sinful world to God.

—DASS BABU.



## Book Review

**CALLED TO COMMUNICATE;** By Dr. T. Dayanandan Francis ; Pages 62 ; Price Rs. 4.00.

'Called to Communicate' is a small but significant compilation of the author's 'occasional papers and articles' on the subject of Communication. It is useful that these loose leaves have come together in print. This booklet is handy and helpful for a basic and Christian understanding of Communications. I carried it as a 'time-pass book' in my travel to Hyderabad. It made a fast and facile reading. Of course one pauses for serious reflection at places, like 'Religious Pluralism' and the 'Indian Theology and Ethics'. These paras in the first paper, carry provocative deep insights. In fact, the first and fourth 'chapters' have close professional affinity in content. A wide range of reading from a Sunday edition of the Indian Express to New World Information and Communication Order must have gone in to make this brief digest on Communications.

There are also some valuable pages conveying pragmatic Dos and Don'ts of Christian editing and publishing—

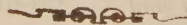
serving as a ready reckoner. The erudite theologian in the Author looks out, in all the pages while the seasoned scholar and the Committed Christian in him permeates through all these articles.

The author who is also a pastor and a poet of repute, forces his way through these pages and comes out at the end with a poetic message and pastoral Psalm, 'When Jesus Communicates...'

The irresistible Christian in Dr. Dayanandan is the real author. Verily, he was 'Called to Communicate' as a savant of Christian Literature. Read this little book and experience the Christian spirit of Communication.

The get up is good with a colourful Communicative colour design.

'DHARMAJA'  
Editor, C.L.S.



# God's Future Today

DR. CHRISTOPHER DURAISINGH

General Secretary, CWM

How audacious it is for the Council for World Mission to rally around a theme such as this during the meeting of its Biennial Council. But is it? If God invites us to journey into his future today how can his people say no?

Three factors have led CWM to hear this call. First, we join with the World Church as it seeks to respond to God's invitation by turning it into a responsive prayer! 'Your will be done: Mission in Christ's way' has thus been taken as the theme for the forthcoming world conference of the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism—World Council of Churches.

Secondly, as we meet in Hong Kong we will be completing ten years of our being together as a new community of Churches for our common sharing in mission; we are led to seek God's future today as we step into a new decade.

Thirdly we are led to long for God's promised future for all humans today, here and now. We see around us people grappling for an assurance of a future at all in the face of a possible nuclear holocaust which threatens the very existence of humanity; we are confronted by the demons of oppression and apartheid which rob millions of their humanity and our longing is filled with a sense of urgency.

What are some of the implications of being invited to journey together into God's future today, particularly for our common commitment in mission? Let me share with you some of my reflections. I offer them as my personal grappling with the theme; hence the style is not systematic but confessional.

## A subversive theme

*God's future today:* As I repeat the words over and over again, they sound dissonant. 'Future'—'today'—'God's future', 'today'—the phrase jars in my ears; it sounds discordant; it turns my normal use of language upside down; it boggles my mind. But is there not something important here? As God invites us, our today is disrupted; its cosiness, its uneasy comfort are broken into. As God's future breaks into our present, it brings a crisis, literally a judgment, shaking us out of where we are.

That is what happened to an Isaiah, a Peter or a Paul. Mission begins when God's future breaks into our today, and there comes an end to our present as we now know it. A new beginning takes over. Repentance is then the first action demanded of us. Let us then say the theme over and over again until it disrupts our present and kindles our imagination to envision God's future beyond the now. In this sense, the theme is subversive. If you let God's future have its way, it will subvert your usual way of being and your social realities as you now know them. But, assuredly, that will be the new beginning.

And here is yet another related thought: does this also imply that CWM is called to proclaim the crisis, the judgment, of God upon the present order of things around the globe? How obedient have we been to this call to a mission of prophetic pronouncement of the end of the present order as God's future breaks into history, the perverted and broken socio-political histories of our countries? The theme legitimates and calls for a refusal of any claim to ultimacy to the present orders and powers of this world. Such a refusal, even if it leads to civil disobedience, is part of our obedience in mission today.

## A theme of protest

*God's future today:* As I repeat the words, I am reminded of God's promised future, a future when all of God's children will sit at God's banquet table, from the north and the south, from the east and the west and be satisfied. Hunger will be no more. But today I see millions going hungry in the South because of the swollen appetite of a few in the North; I know that in God's future there is no distinction between humans in terms of colour, race or sex; but today tens of thousands are being hounded like dogs because of their black skin by agents of demonic apartheid. Women are exploited; racism rends asunder one common humanity.

I hear, too, the promise that in God's future there will be no cry of distress in our streets, but today young girls, even four-year-olds, are raped, and older people are systematically plundered. The rulers of the super powers and their stooges plan for the slaughter of the whole of humanity through an insane arms race. In the midst of it all, God invites you and me to long for his future. Can it be anything other than an invitation to cry out, groan aloud: 'How long, O Lord?' When will be that 'today'?

The theme then, is a call to a mission of crying out, to groan in the groaning of God's children and of creation as a whole. Have we heard the groan of creation? A Jeremiah, an Ezekiel and a Paul heard and cried out. Is this not the only way to follow Jesus in Mission?

But I remember that in Exodus 3, the cry of 'How long, O Lord?' soon turned into an active protest against the oppressions of today in the light of God's future. Does it now mean that for you and me too, our groaning should turn into a protest, a revolt, a public voicing with and on behalf of our oppressed sisters and brothers and also the voiceless creation, the eco-system itself?

Has your Church, a member Church of CWM, learned to protest, to revolt with and for the powerless? Are we the voice of the voiceless in our commitment to mission? Seeking God's future today cannot let us go in comfort until peace and justice become the daily experience of all of God's people in the here and now.

### **A surprising theme**

*God's future today*: It is God's future that breaks in; it is not an extrapolation of what we know from the past. Rather, it comes as a surprise because our God is a God of surprises, one who does all things always new. God's future is his gift to us and not something of our own making. Does it not call for a radical openness in the present to the unexpected ways in which his future appears today?

Mission today, then, begins with a total openness to God's future as it comes among unexpected people and in unheard of ways. Mission is to 'get-in-behind' a God who is always ahead of us in our history. How discerning have you and your Church been? What stories have you got to share of God's surprising presence in saving and liberating your people? How routine and domesticated have even our mission ventures become? The theme intends to break us open again and turn us inside out, so that we shall be truly prepared for God's future to break in among us today. We cannot programme God's future or structure it. We can only be led by it if we are open to receive and be shaped by it.

### **An all-changing theme**

*God's future today*: Our present, today is radically qualified and relativised by God's future. Whatever happens to us today, whatever we are and do today, all are only a foretaste of the fullness of God's future promised for all humans.

CWM's very manner of sharing our resources is a sign and a foretaste of what God wants to happen among all peoples. Does your Church take this commitment seriously? If you are a member of the Council, an officer of your Church or a youth leader, what have you done to make your Church's partnership truly an aroma and a foretaste of God's future? Does the manner of sharing of financial resources between those in the North and those in the South testify to a God-intended way of the North sharing earth's resources equitably with the nations of the South?

If the Church itself is a sign and a foretaste of the future that God wills for all humans, the Church cannot be an end in itself. The ultimate purpose of our mission, then, is not the expansion of the Church but rather the expansion of God's future of shalom among all humans. We need to set our priorities right in our mission.

Further, longing for God's future today will not let us be neutral. We cannot be impartial. A passion for God's future calls us to be biased and partial towards those who are deprived of adequate resources to live in a decent human life. Thus praying for God's future to be manifested among us today leads us into a radical alteration in our style of life, our patterns of consumption, and systems of values too.

### **An inclusive theme**

*God's future today*: the future is God's future. Our God is the universal creator of all people and therefore God's future is for all. This, then calls for a radical inclusiveness which brings into our vision those whom we traditionally leave outside our fellowship. Our today into which God's future breaks needs to be shared by all, even those who are non-Christians and non-believers. When Isaiah saw the vision of God's future, he saw Egypt, Assyria and Israel together belonging to God. He says, 'When that day comes Israel shall rank with Egypt and Assyria, those three, and shall be a blessing in the centre of the world. So the Lord of Hosts will bless them: A blessing be upon Egypt my people, upon Assyria, the work of my hands, and upon Israel, my possession' (Isaiah 19 : 25).

But our prayer is that 'that day', will be 'today'.

What are the implications of our mission? Mission requires our unity, first among all Christian people. What sort of local ecumenism does your Church build up? Or how much of your work is in rivalry with other denominations? What about people of other faiths and of no faith? How inclusive are we? Should CWM remain exclusively a family of Churches who share a common colonial, Anglo-Saxon and Reformed history? What sort of new membership within CWM will manifest God's promised future in Isaiah today, here and now, as we step into the second decade of our common sharing together?

### **A theme for action**

*God's future today*: This is our prayer and longing. How can we equip God's people at the grassroots in our local congregations to be open to this future? What sort of leadership is it that we need to work towards, if truly? God's future is to become today's reality in our Churches.

(Continued on page 14)

## **STOP PRESS**

**WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE**

**THE SUDDEN DEMISE OF**

**BISHOP ERNEST JOHN**

**FORMERLY BISHOP OF NANDYAL DIOCESE.**

**HE DIED ON 30TH JULY AND  
WAS BURIED ON 6TH AUGUST IN LONDON.**

# Kindernothilfe—Our Ministry and Where We Stand

KARL FRIEDRICH WINDGASSEN\*

The activities of Kindernothilfe e. V., Duisburg, date back to the beginnings in 1957, the first fosterships having been arranged in October 1959. Today the number of children and youths cared for by means of fosterships amounts to 107,017 (figure per 31.12.1985).

Up to now, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, which were decisive at that time, have remained our mission and directive.

‘And who so shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me’ (Matthew Ch. 18 v. 5) and ‘Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me’ (Matthew Ch. 25 v. 40).

Fosterships as help for needy young people overseas are not the invention of Kindernothilfe as they had existed as early as before World War II within the activities of the ‘Basler Mission’ (mission of Basle), from which we adopted the idea of arranging fosterships.

We consider Kindernothilfe as a diaconal-missionary institution, i.e. *not* as an organization for development aid. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that in consequence of this fostership-work, essential contributions towards development are brought about.

## Our Partners

Kindernothilfe's overseas partners are the churches with their parishes, and local Christian organizations. They fulfil their diaconal-missionary ministry, as we do, on the mission of the Lord we worship in common. It is they who determine the kind of programmes, and it is they who actually carry out the work on the spot in the countries concerned supported by Kindernothilfe and its fosters. It is our partners, too, who are the owners of the individual institutions and projects, for the running of which they are directly responsible.

Aims and objectives of Kindernothilfe's fostership ministry and that of its partner churches and their parishes, are to promote the development and education of needy children and youths as to enable them.

- to help themselves: the concern is the ‘help for self-help’ that will not only be sufficient for their own lives, but will also be of help for the whole family.
- to listen to the message of the Gospel and experience it,
- to become agents of hope and the necessary changes in their communities and their countries.

\* The author, at present Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kindernothilfe, has been a member of its various boards since 1962.

Kindernothilfe considers its approach of ‘Responsibility here for a child there’ as a contribution—certainly not the only one possible—to support people in the Third World, while still respecting the approach and actual form of different other types of Third World aid.

With our partners, we maintain a close exchange of views on the direction of the total ministry. Meetings and talks between responsible officers of Kindernothilfe and our partner churches serve to that purpose as well as the consultations with the partner organizations set up by the overseas churches.

We regard partnership as a relationship between equally responsible partners, not modifying the other's identity. This is why we emphasize again and again that Kindernothilfe itself has no areas of work of its own overseas, neither do we possess any property overseas. Any funds made available for building or modernizing or extending institutions, are always transferred to the ownership of our partners concerned.

Kindernothilfe's partners supervise the careful use of all the funds sent to them, and submit an audited statement of account of their proper use.

All over the world, Kindernothilfe is providing support to children and youths in 35 countries. Our major partners are those in South India, Brazil, North India, Chile, Ethiopia, South Africa and the Philippines (see table 1). In these countries, more than 80% of all fosterships are supported in almost 1,200 day-care centres, hostels and other institutions.

TABLE 1: *Major Partners of Fostership aid (as per 31.12.1985)*

Partner	Children/Young Persons
South India	30,746
Brazil	15,005
North India	10,440
Chile	9,263
Ethiopia*	8,521
South Africa	5,136
The Philippines	4,863

\* including 1.590 famine orphans in 1985

## Focal Points of the Ministry

Although one individual child or youth benefits from the fostership aid, it goes far beyond the support of an individual person. On the contrary, it is directed in such a way that it can influence the whole family and what is more, the whole community.

Our Philippine partner organization puts it as follows: 'The child is the entry-point to reach the parents and all the people in the target-Community'. Consequently, it uses the term 'Community-oriented child day-care programme'.

One of our Chilean partners has characterized their work in a day-care centre as follows:

The children are cared for primarily by young women or mothers from the slums, and only in recent years have the men joined in.

Together with them, we have defined and set the following targets:

1. education for the children, enabling them to unfold their personalities and to develop themselves freely, without being alienated from 'their own (social) class', their environment;
2. education for those women and men looking after the children;
3. integration of the parents into the educational process (particularly the fathers who hardly care for their children);
4. involvement of the whole community, promoting and building up of awareness (education liberadora according to P. Freire).

As stated in table 2, day-care centres predominate in the fostership programmes of our partners, which quite clearly shows that fostership must not be equated with upbringing in a Home.

TABLE 2: *Focal points of the partners' ministry*  
(figures per 31.12.1985)

* Day-care centres against hopelessness	51,741 children	48.3%
* Hostels, boarding homes and scholarships opportunities for human development of the children of the poor	33,079 children 2,984 youth	30.9%
* orphanages and Homes for social orphans for the abandoned	9,034 children	
* Special institutions for handicapped children for those who suffer	4,324 children	4.4%
* Vocational training	7,025 youth	6.6%
* in 41 vocational training centres		
* in 15 centres for functional education		
* including extended fosterships for self-help and help for others		
* Feeding centres as an additional nutrition aid	2,525 children	2.4%
* Promotion within the families	699 children	0.7%

Originally, Kindernothilfe's work started with supporting children and young people in hostels, boarding schools, orphanage and homes.

The reproach that upbringing in a hostel is a straining factor on the children's future, is denied by the church leaders, for instance in India, and is stated as being untrue. 74% of the Indian church leaders and bishops owe their own education and thus their present position to the time they spent in hostels. One of them is Bishop Gorai, the Moderator of the Church of North-India, who has for many years been active in the community work as well as in the hostel education programme supported by Kindernothilfe. These men don't feel harmed—on the contrary, they claim unanimously that their time in the hostel has extraordinarily developed their personalities.

Again and again, a learning process is pointed out, which is particularly important for India: Members of different castes and different religions live together in the hostels, they eat together and come to know each other as human beings with the same needs, fears and expectations. Thus, hostels contribute to overcome caste distinctions.

Upbringing children in a Home in Germany or in India is such a completely different matter that any simplified comparisons are inadmissible. In Germany, children who have suffered harm from their families as well as social orphans are usually sent to a Home when being infants. So the term 'Upbringing in a Home' largely has a negative image. In India, for example, the hostels are an integral part of the educational system. The Government of India and various groups run innumerable hostels. The people are in favour of them, and it is regarded as a privilege to get a place in hostels. Moreover, in many cases it doesn't become necessary to stay in a hostel before entering school, but very often at the start of primary, middle or high school.

Here are some comments made on this by the General Secretary of the Church of South India, Madras:

'In these ways the children from the Hostels and Boarding Homes are the agents of change, the catalysts to the possibilities of a better life, and the agents for the spread of forward thinking.

The Government of India also believes in starting and maintaining Hostels and Homes for the children of the underprivileged classes and for this, they follow the programme of the churches. In my home state, i.e., Tamil Nadu alone, the education department of the Government has opened 375 Hostels for 60,000 poor children, the Harijan Welfare Department has opened up 621 Hostels for 38,619 children and the Backward Class Department has 294 Hostels for 19,784 children. In total 1,290 Homes are run by the Government and 118,400 children are educated'.

As the result of a scientific study of the hostel programme of the Christian churches in India and its promotion by means of fosterships, the general target of this programme was outlined as follows:

Children from families in need are to be given the possibility to unfold their gifts and talents, so that they may become independent, creative, and socially responsible personalities who can make efforts to build

up a humane society in the church, in their communities and the state, and who actively support others worse off than themselves.

As a matter of fact, many of the children supported by Kindernothilfe are affected by the high unemployment rate in Third World countries, when they should be starting out in a profession.

Nevertheless, inquiries have proved that fostership aid isn't wasted, but is, in the true sense of the word, an aid in starting out on a life that is worth living. Healthy nutrition in the crucial early years, school education and the personality development the children experience in the hostels and day-care centres, help them in any case.

It was clear even to the founders of Kindernothilfe that fostership should continue up to a school-leaving qualification, and if possible, lead to a vocational qualification. The term 'if possible' demonstrates the hard reality: In many countries, a really worthwhile vocational training can't be realized or can be realized, at the most, under enormous difficulties. Very often, Kindernothilfe and its overseas partner churches have to go through years and years of struggle and preparational work to reach their goal in this respect.

At present, Kindernothilfe fosters are helping about 7,000 young people in their vocational training or professional studies, among them over 6,200 by so-called 'extended fosterships' with a higher monthly fostership payment to cover the higher training costs. A large number of the young people thus sponsored live in hostels or boarding homes, undergoing vocational training conducted by governmental or private institutions or self-employed craftsmen.

In the last few years, the Indian churches have repeatedly emphasized the importance they attach in particular to the introduction of these 'extended fosterships'; their efforts have already brought about some remarkable results in South India, a few of which we describe below:

- Establishing a vocational guidance (since 1972). Due to the positive results, the vocational guidance programme was introduced all over South India in 1982 after quite a long period of testing. 13 social workers have made it possible for all the foster-children and a number of others in addition, in some areas, to find vocational training places.
- Setting up a ten-year master plan to extend and improve the church training centres (1972). From this time on, many training institutions in India have been modernized with the support of other organizations, such as Bread for the World (Brot für die Welt) and the Protestant Central Office for Development Aid (Evangelische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe). Above all, the qualification of the training officers has been improved considerably. In the last 10 years, the Church of South India has established 16 new training centres just for girls, as there had been none before in some regions. They are all supported by Kindernothilfe.
- Introduction of a work experience scheme for children (1978) with the motto 'Earn while you

learn' to make them realize the value of handicrafts as well as to discover their own hidden talents.

- Establishing a follow-up programme (1978) to offer advice to young people who formerly had been sponsored, even after they have ceased to receive active help, in case they are faced with any difficulties in their profession. More and more of them are becoming actively involved in this follow-up scheme voluntarily. In each region, they meet regularly in small groups and have taken on the responsibility of looking after those foster children who have just ceased to benefit from fostership.
- In 1983, an international workshop on the evaluation of the hostel education programme of the Church of South India Council for Child Care was organized by our partner organization in Bangalore, at which further plans were determined to promote vocational training. During the years before, a scientific study of the educational programme for hostels had been carried out by an Indo-German research group.

These efforts, illustrated by the example of Kindernothilfe's largest and longest standing partner in India, make it clear how the significance of vocational training and promotion is increasing enormously with the progress of the children sponsored from childhood to adulthood. This is why we speak of 'vocational training fosterships' nowadays, and try to stir up the interest of people willing to help.

Besides, Kindernothilfe and its partners—backed financially by the Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation in Bonn—try to find ways of arranging assistance for former foster children if they want to become self-employed or start a small handicrafts enterprise. To reach this goal, it is intended that six Crafts Promotion Centres are to be set up throughout South India—especially in rural areas—with a small working staff of experts, as soon as the preliminary requirement analysis will have been drawn up showing the future prospects for such handicrafts enterprises.

An example for the African continent is Manzini (Swaziland), where our partner churches have realized the concept of 'Learning through Training and Production' in a crafts training centre. Other organisations, such as Misereor, supplied qualified and experienced craftsmen as training instructors. The further extension of this scheme is being supported by Kindernothilfe and funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation in Bonn. Up to now, all young people leaving this scheme have managed to find jobs.

The success of all efforts for vocational training and occupational help stands and falls with the motivation and ability of the training staff. Any necessary reforms cannot be implemented overnight, and often the training officers themselves have to be completely re-trained. Patience and tenacity are called for.

Another focus is the support of more than 4,000 handicapped children in 66 Homes i.e. in Homes for children suffering from or disabled by polio, for the deaf, the blind, the mentally retarded, and the leprosy afflicted or children whose parents are suffering from leprosy.

41 of these homes are situated in India alone. When, in 1964, Kindernothilfe started to support Homes for handicapped children, there were only four such institutions within the Indian Protestant Churches and only a few governmental Homes for the handicapped in South India. It was very expensive to provide a place in such a Home for a handicapped child, which virtually excluded children from poor families. By way of fosterships, many of these children have been given a chance to receive training adopted to their particular handicaps.

### Our Ministry in Germany

As per its understanding, Kindernothilfe is working in a spirit of cordial co-operation with Protestant and Catholic Christians in Germany. The annual grants we receive from the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland (Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland) and the Evangelical Church of Westphalia (Evangelische Kirche von Westfalen) for the running of our head office are a proof of their involvement in our ministry. Kindernothilfe has been a member of the Diaconal Association of the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland (Diakonisches Werk der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland) since 1972.

We realize that, beyond all information distributed through our magazine 'Kindernothilfe', our prayer circular and the annual reports from the overseas institutions themselves, there is great need to discuss and come to know more about the tasks we and our partners fulfil. The programmes we conduct for this purpose are :

- Information meetings with a slide show in a closed group of interested observers; school classes, youth groups, women's groups from a congregation, professional groups—some with and some without links with Kindernothilfe.
- Meetings of fosterparents, to which all the fosterparents or friends are invited from a region, either through a personal invitation or by the organizers note on the calendar of events in the 'Kindernothilfe' magazine.
- Seminars for fosterparents who want to take on a more active commitment to work in the Third World, over and above their fostership. We have been running more and more of these seminars last year and this. At this time, we offer an opportunity for 20 to 30 people to have an intensive look into our work and that of our partners overseas, from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon for six or more weekends a year, at places well-distributed throughout the Federal Republic.

During these programmes, again and again, we find that the foster begins to get interested in the living conditions of the child he is supporting and in the casual contexts that have brought about the situation.

Beyond their fosterships, many of the sponsors are actively involved in so-called 'Third World Working Groups' both within the Churches are independent of them. Kindernothilfe is backing this commitment by means of the programmes it organizes, thus contributing to development-oriented educational work as an integral part of its efforts to overcome hunger and deprivation and its causes in the Third World.

## C.L.S. RECENT PUBLICATIONS

1. CALLED TO COMMUNICATE  
T. Dayanandan Francis
2. PAUL DAVID DEVANANDAN Vol. II  
Ed. Joackim Wietzke
3. INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHIATRY  
Annamma Abraham and Abraham Verghese
4. FROM MISSIONS TO CHURCH IN KARNATAKA  
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TIRUVALLA AND TRIVANDRUM.**

# Mission and Dialogue in Local Congregation

Addressing itself to the challenge of equipping the Church in India to cope with the increasingly pressing demands of the religiously plural Indian situation, the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) organised a week-long study conference (15-23 May 1987) at the Ecumenical Christian Centre (ECC), Whitefield, Bangalore. This programme brought together thirty young clergymen and ten resource persons from various denominational background from all over the country.

The thematic focus of the study conference was *Mission and Dialogue in the Local Church*, and the total programme was carefully structured to accommodate worship, biblical reflections on the central theme, adequate concentration on main presentations, proper small group interactions, study time and exposure visits. The manageable size of the group participating, and the continual residential availability of the facilitators promoted a great degree of helpful, unstructured interaction as well. The programme each day started with a time for devotions in the ECC chapel followed by Bible study.

Dr. G. R. Singh, Secretary, NCCI, in his introduction and opening session titled *Mission and Dialogue* highlighted some of the 'pointed and needling questions' confronting the Christian theological stand on the issue of mission and dialogue. Advocating rootedness of the practice of our faith in the given realities of the witness situation, Dr. Singh pleaded for a more adventurous acceptance of the fullness of the Christological Truth as part of the Apostolic 'sentness' of the Church's Mission. Such an approach would be open to the 'two-way process' and our duty to become 'aware of some of the deepest convictions' of our neighbours as part of our obedience to the 'living God who is always present in the history of mankind'. This would rescue us, Dr. Singh observed, from a situation of human isolation and transform the Church into the sharing community, the leaven in the lump, that it is called to be. He then went on to detail some of the prospects and problems in the context of mission and dialogue as well as make concrete suggestions towards a growing spiritual brotherhood among the living Faiths.

The Rev. Dr. T. Dayanandan Francis, General Secretary, CLS, Madras and the Rev. Dr. Renty Keitzer of the Eastern Theological College, Jorhat, were the resource persons for Bible studies. Dr. Francis, in

his three units of studies reflected systematically on 'Mission and Dialogue in the Local Church'. Defining the conceptual framework of his approach Dr. Francis, in his opening unit, examined the 'Meaning and Purpose of Mission', emphasizing the Trinitarian foundation for mission. He focused on the Church's call to shape society according to God's Will and maintained that mission, evangelism and witness are inseparable aspects of the same *Missio Dei*. In this context he lamented the polarisation between the ecumenicals and the evangelicals. In his second unit, Dr. Francis with abundant textual support, sketched the outlines of a possible biblical approach to the question of dialogue. This was further consolidated with a brief account of the outstanding landmarks in the history of dialogue since Edinburgh 1910. He touched upon, in passing, the need to be vigilant against the lurking dangers of 'relativism, shallow friendliness and aggressive intolerance'. The whole burden of the dialogue, he felt, must be borne with 'repentance, humility, joy, integrity and the capacity to be wounded. In his last study unit, Dr. Francis presented a practical model for dialogue as part of the mission of a local church.

The Rev. Renty Keitzer made the following observations in his study unit. The local congregation is the Church which is in dialogue with the world as God's instrument. This commission given to the Church is essentially theocentric and Christocentric. The Church in its witnessing is committed to the universal lordship of Jesus Christ.

The Rev. G. D. Melanchthen of the UTC, Bangalore in his paper 'Mission and Evangelism in a Pluralistic Context' argued for a clear understanding of the nature and scope of interfaith dialogue and established the need for a dialogic approach to evangelism in the Indian context. This must be so even if the motive of dialogue is not proselytisation. In and through dialogue we understand our neighbours and ourselves better. He was particularly burdened of the need to be sensitive to the richness of the Indian religious symbols and archetypes.

The central question for the Rev. Valson Tampu, St. Stephen's College, Delhi, in his paper 'Christian Spirituality in a Religiously Plural Context' was whether the Church's awakening to the challenge of pluralism was a spiritual ferment or desperate diplomacy. He presented a critique of the various established schools

of thought in the area of Christian response to religious pluralism and came to the conclusion that the enduring value of the exercise would be the deepening and purifying of the individual spiritual traditions and a liberation from arrogance and isolationism. He was emphatic that in our theological voyage towards the pluralistic unknown, we should enhance the Christocentric and Scriptural aspects of Mission, eschewing any hasty or naive compromises. Only then would Interfaith dialogue be an authentic spiritual exercise rather than a play of shadows.

Dr. Sam V. Bhajjan, Director of the Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies, Hyderabad, dealt with the difficult area of 'Muslim-Christian Dialogue in India' in the light of his vast experience in this particular field. Thoroughly persuaded of the need for and relevance of interfaith dialogue in India, Dr. Bhajjan felt that the Christian initiative in this field must be sustained despite difficulties that include the absence of a universally accepted definition of dialogue itself. He went on to identify some of the misunderstandings that our Muslim brothers have concerning our faith which, as dialogue-partners, we would do well to be aware of. This was followed by a brief account of the history of Muslim-Christian dialogues in India. In a particularly valuable section of his paper Dr. Bhajjan presented some guidelines for Muslim-Christian dialogue. He went on to deal with the need to rid ourselves of the offending historical accidental like the lingering Western garb and idiom in order to facilitate a more spontaneous interaction between the two.

To Fr. Albert Nambiamparambil who spoke on 'Inter-religious Dialogue and Inculturation dialogue was no covert evangelism but an end in itself. Dialogue is an existential adventure in which the participants are thrown back to their roots to which they are invited to respond liberately. He was confident that the nascent resulting spirituality will discover its own appropriate expression. He introduced briefly the various models for dialogue such as the rainbow model, the nuclear model, the geometric model and so on. In the dialogic experience the 'Christian partner has to unlearn many old myths, look for the emerging myths, listen to the music and rhythm of the people among whom the Word has to take new birth'. In his inimitable theopoetic style Fr. Albert observed 'the call to dialogue is a call to communion...it is to follow the route of Exodus from isolation into communion'. This eucharistic sharing that transcends all man-made boundaries of denomination and religion is the most authentic expression of a church in dialogue, Fr. Albert observed.

There was a strong plea from the Rev. M. Deenabandhu of the NCCI in his paper 'Interfaith Dialogue and Youth Initiatives' for the due recognition of the vast potential embodied in the youth. He articulated the sadness of not employing this almost unlimited potential for good particularly in a context of world-wide religious resurgence and the rise of fundamentalism. He felt that the youth, free as they are from 'petty loyalties and parochial interests' are in a position to take wholesome initiatives in the context of interfaith dialogue. He felt, however, that the youth have to be trained for a constructive involvement in this enterprise and made few practical suggestions in this direction.

'Dalit theology is not mere reflections on doctrine about God or Church. It is a transforming praxis of social reality, through which they realize themselves

and God' observed Mr. Abraham Ayrookuzhil in his well-documented and passionately argued paper on 'Dalit Theology: A Movement of Counter-Culture'. Though different from the stuff of familiar theology, the paper held its place in the matrix of the study conference by highlighting a vast chunk of religio-social reality the Church has to learn to accommodate in its mission and witness. The celebration of such an awareness is relevant as too often we could, unwittingly, subscribe to the dominant Sanskrit and Brahminical ideologies that have expropriated from the Dalits their legitimate social, political, cultural and religious identity. The presentation led to challenging the Christian vocation at the present time to be part of the Dalit dream of liberation and individuation. Would the Church in this country, with a mandate to preach the Kingdom to the poor, enable the 'no people' to be a 'people of God', is the question.

Mr. Sydney Rebeiro, the Dean of the Students Affairs at the University of Delhi reminded the clergy of the difficulty challenges which accompany the ushering of the twenty-first century and the limited resources at the disposal of the clergy. He spoke about the spiritual power, particularly of prayer in the context of the opening of the Marian Year. The young clergy must denounce hypocrisy, intellectual dishonesty hampering urge to maintain status quo in the society and particularly the political world and the body politic of India. On the more practical and immediate problems he reminded of the abuses of child labour, drug abuse, alcohol, poverty, linguistic and fundamentalism among the youth of India.

Mr. Jyoti Sahi, the well known Christian artist spoke about interfaith dialogue and communal peace through arts. He said that a greater stress has to be laid on creation theology as the Christian understanding of incarnation has risen out of its interpretation of the meaning of creation. The task of creation theology is also to liberate Christian thought from its patriarchal bias. The danger of too much God talk (theocentric) is that it becomes very abstract and philosophical. The experience of God's love has to be mediated through signs and symbols and human personhood before the experienced of what lies beyond this world. The concern for the future of the earth is also tied up with concern for fellow human beings. God is a Creator and is concerned with the well being of all creatures. Both the creation and the resurrection lie outside the empirical facts of history in that area which is generally referred to as mythic. Yet without these references points salvation history becomes empty and meaningless. Christian faith is based not merely on the affirmation of a historical Jesus who lived and died, but also on a belief in his resurrection and imminent return to Judge and re-create the universe. It is at this level of the cosmic Christ that we can also comprehend the Christ who transcends the historical limitations of his cultural milieu. The risen Christ is no longer the Jewish Jesus or at least the Jewish Jesus is transfigured and rediscovered through the mystery of the resurrection. By representing Jesus as an Indian, we are obviously not representing the historical Jesus but rather the Jesus of Faith, in whose image every believer is formed. Indian Christian art has been very much concerned with this image of Jesus in every person, an image which is ultimately the image of the Risen Lord, present in the heart of every human being. The Christ of the 'Indian Road' is the Lord who walked with his

(Contd on p. 16)

AUGUST 1987

# ROLE OF CHURCHES IN ASIA

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By PARK SANG-JUNG

The role of Churches in Asia today was outlined to an international gathering in Hong Kong this month.

Speaking at the Council Meeting of the Council for World Mission, Revd. Park Sang-Jung, General Secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia said 'Asian Christians in the post-colonial revolutionary situation understood their realities in terms of God in Christ being present in the process of revolutionary changes in Asian societies. They affirmed the necessity of 'Churches' recognition of the signs of the Kingdom of God in every awakening of man's spirit, in every aspiration towards a nobler life', said Revd. Park.

'The establishment of a democratic political framework in which the mass of people can exercise their sovereignty responsibly is one of the fundamental issues which many Asian societies face today.

'In the pluralistic Asian situations the role of Churches would vary from one place to another. However it is essential that the Churches in Asia emphasise their responsibility for the democratisation of their societies', he said.

Council members heard first hand about the current crisis in Korea. The Presbyterian Church of Korea has applied for membership of CWM and Nak Un Kim who was present at the Council Meeting was able to bring Council Members up to date. The Council is continuing in dialogue with the Church.

Continuing on the theme of democratisation, Revd. Park said 'How can our resolve for Partnership in Mission contribute to the process of the democratisation of international relationships. The missionary task of the Asian Churches is to constantly discern Christ in the complex and changing historical realities of Asian people and courageously engage in the struggles of the people for the transformation of socio-political and economic order of Asian society at all levels and to invite the people to participate in building a new human community.

'The Asian ecumenical movement emphasised "confessing the faith" more than the confession of faith. This was not meant to decry the Churches' need for theological statement of beliefs, rather the emphasis was laid on the importance for Asian Churches to confess their faith in Christ Jesus in the revolutionary context of Asia.

'In the recent decade the Asian ecumenical movement stressed the importance of the notion of people and in our theological explorations we affirm the option for the people as the starting point. They see the present reality from the perspective of the future, in other words, the people have a greater potentiality in grasping the truth of God's righteousness and sovereignty ultimately ruling this world, because they reject the present order in the hope and aspiration for something better and more just, which belongs to the future.

'When the suffering Asian people encounter bruised, wounded and crucified Christ as a companion in the bleeding agony and desperate struggle for justice they experience the profound mystery of God Immanuel through Christ. The important Christological question the people raise is not so much who Christ is, rather where is Jesus?

'As the people struggle and even die for the "new society" or "new human community", the Asian Church is challenged to re-interpret its understanding of Kingdom values which informs the Christians vision for the political future of the Asian society. The task of the Church therefore, is to be not only in dialogue with the people, but become part of the process and struggle of peoples movement and share our vision of the Kingdom with the people', said Revd. Park.

CWM celebrated its 10th anniversary on 18th July. Twelve years ago the decision was taken to restructure the organisation so that all member Churches were given equal status within a partnership, and two years later the new CWM was inaugurated.

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# Tenth Anniversary Service

## Council for World Mission

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A Service of Thanksgiving and Dedication was held this month in Hong Kong to mark the tenth anniversary of the Council for World Mission.

Part of the Council's 10-day biennial meeting, the service was held in Hop Yat Church, and the Council Members were joined by people from local congregations.

The preacher was Dr. C. M. Kao, General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, who spoke on the theme of the Council Meeting, 'God's Future Today'.

'Our roots go back into the great missionary movement of the 19th century and we look back to those early years of sacrifice and give thanks that the Church was planted in Asia, Africa, the Pacific and the Caribbean,' said Dr. Kao.

'From 1977 God has brought us together into one family, sharing in the unity and mission of God's people. We are citizens in countries with different political structures. We are Christians in Churches with different backgrounds. We are people in societies with different cultures, but in God's grace we have become one. For this we give thanks.

'During the past ten years our Churches and people have undergone trials and sufferings, we have been sorely tested and God has protected us and, despite our human sin and weakness, has given us a vision for his mission and the strength to carry it out. As we give thanks for God's grace to us in the past, we also look to the future which he has promised. God's future calls us to renew faith and commitment to him.

'Today more than 70% of the total population of the world are not Christians. It is our urgent task to communicate the Gospel of Jesus to all people around us. In Jesus we have hope, comfort, forgiveness of sin, new life, and the courage to be. Many people around us are suffering from disease, mental illness, physical handicaps and so on. It is our mission to help and comfort

those who are crying and through this service we pray that the Lord will wipe away their tears. It is our mission to work for the restoration of human dignity for all who are crying under injustice and oppression. If we want our countries to become great countries, we must train our people to become great people. We must educate our people to become people of faith, of love, of vision, of wisdom, of justice, and of peace.

'We believe that all Churches around the world are united in one body in Jesus Christ. So it is our mission to transcend political, racial and cultural differences to establish good relationships with all Churches round the world. This is not the age of individual heroism, it is the age of ecumenical partnership in mission'.

Dr. Kao referred to the Kaohsiung incident and the subsequent arrest and imprisonment of leaders of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan. 'But the Lord has been merciful to the Church. God encouraged the Church through the constant prayers and love of many Christians around the world. God increased our membership and enabled us to complete buildings, establish the Women's Development Centre, Fishermen's Service Centre, and others.

'Through all these events we have experienced that the Lord is a Living God, he is the Lord of history. We believe that God's justice and love will overcome the injustice and sin of the world. Jesus Christ will come and will establish the new heaven and new earth. Therefore let us believe in God's future and communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ to all people around us who are sharing in suffering with them in love, justice and wisdom here and now.'

Included in the service were elements from many parts of the world to indicate the international partnership of the Council for World Mission. Gifts were brought from each region and shared with the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China, the host Church.



# The Diocesan Press

225 Years of Service

Compiled by

A. D. THOMAS STEPHEN, *Superintendent, Diocesan Press, Madras*

The press, now the property of the Christian Literature Society in South India, was first established as the S.P.C.K. Press in 1761. But to understand the history of the Press one needs to begin at an earlier date. It was in 1706 that the first Protestant missionaries sent out by the Royal Danish Mission landed on the shores of Tranquebar. This is a historic date and next year will be the 250th anniversary of the Tranquebar Mission. In 1711 a liberal supply of books, money, a printing press, types, paper and other stores was sent to the missionaries by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the press at Tranquebar came into being. In 1716 Bartholomew Ziegenbalg, one of the first Tranquebar missionaries, returning from Europe landed at Madras and with the aid of William Stevenson, the Garrison Chaplain, who was also a member of the S.P.C.K., established schools at Madras and Cuddalore and the Madras part of the mission came into existence.

The Madras mission was destined to have an exciting history. It was first established on a piece of ground somewhere near where the present High Court stands and there it continued until 1746 when the French forces captured Madras and the work of the mission suffered greatly. John Philip Fabricius had arrived in Madras six years before and when the French came he and his small Christian flock fled to Pulicat, some miles up the coast, where they took refuge until they were able to return to Madras.

In 1760 the fortunes of war changed and Pondicherry was captured by Sir Eyre Coote and in the plunder brought back to Fort. St. George was a small printing press and types. Fabricius begged to be allowed to have this press and it was given to him on the understanding that he should do any printing that the Government might require. Thus curiously in 1761 the press at Vepery came into being and here during the next thirty years Fabricius printed his famous Tamil Dictionary and Grammar and his revised version of the Tamil New Testament. He was a very great Tamil scholar and his Tamil translations of German hymns are still widely used by the Tamil Christian community. He died in 1791 and was followed by Gericke, a pupil and colleague of the great Christian Frederick Schwartz of Tanjore and one whose services to the public and to Government almost equal those of his teacher.

For many years the press led a precarious life. The S.P.C.K. Committee in London kept it well supplied with paper, printing materials and machinery. But as its funds were used to support schools and other mission work, it never had enough working capital and on occasions did not have enough money to pay its workers. The press was closed for five years from 1851 until 1856 when a favourable opportunity to restart the work under a new policy occurred.

The American Mission Press under the able management of P. R. Hunt had reached a very high standard of workmanship in the city. For the printing of Winslow's Tamil-English Dictionary Hunt had cast new founts of Tamil types. The punches for these he had designed and cut in Madras with the aid of Indian workmen. For clearness and beauty these types surpassed not only the previous founts but also the best imported, English type of the period, and though the statement may sound somewhat startling, it is clear that in the 1850's Madras workmen could lead the world the difficult art of punch-cutting. This is supported by the fact that some years ago when the American Linotype Company proposed to opt a new Tamil face for the newly introduced Tamil Linotype machine, the expert sent out was greatly impressed by the beauty of Hunt's letters. On enquiry he found, that many leading Indian printers and publishers in Madras strongly favoured exact reproduction of these letters for the new Linotype machine. The whole printing of Winslow's Dictionary can challenge comparison with the printing of that period in any part of the world.

The American Mission, however, decided to withdraw from Madras and it was on the advice of the Rev. C. E. Kennet that the Madras District S.P.C.K. Committee decided to purchase the whole of the American Mission plant and transfer it with most of the workmen to the S.P.C.K. premises at Vepery.

This was done and the punches and one or two old handpresses of the period are still in existence at Vepery. Another important change was also made at the same time. The needs of the press were made the first charge on the income of the press and under the wise guidance of Mr. Kennet and later of the Rev. Canon Edward Sell, the press

continued to expand and from its income was able to assist educational and missionary work in South India.

In more recent times the S.P.C.K. Press was taken over by the Anglican Diocese of Madras and became known as the Diocesan Press. Although this name is kept until today, it had to undergo another change of management in 1930.

At Park Town the Christian Literature Society had grown into an important institution. It was an amalgamation of earlier Societies founded by the Rev. Dr. John Murdoch who was a pioneer in educational work and who founded the societies as publishing and distributing agencies for educational and Christian literature. The Christian churches in South India had come to rely more and more upon the Society for its literature needs and under the wise administration of its fourth General Secretary, Mr. W. H. Warren, who retired in 1954, the work had grown and expanded. The society already owned its own press on the premises at Park Town, but in 1930 Mr. Warren purchased for the Society the Diocesan Press at Vepery and added the smaller C.L.S. Press which was moved from Park Town.

The Diocesan Press is a fully equipped book press handling

letterpress printing in many languages. It uses both Linotype and Monotype machines as well as handsetting for its English work and prints also by direct and offset lithography and has a battery of letterpress and offset machines in addition to various types of machinery required for the bindery. Its process department handles a wide variety of block work as well as being fully equipped to deal with the plate making work for offset printing. Its foundry handles roller and type casting and a permanent staff of artists are continually engaged on designing, lay-out and engraving work. A special department is engaged on cheque and document printing which is a regular work undertaken for many banks and firms. The press does all its own binding and hand binding of a high quality is undertaken. The press, in addition to the work which it does for its own parent Society, handles orders from many old established publishers not only from Madras and Andhra but from other parts of India and even from outside. Printing orders have come from many neighbouring Asian countries and, in addition to book work, many longstanding periodicals are regularly produced from the press. It has been a happy feature of the work of the press that so many of the press' customers are old friends who have placed their printing orders with the press for many years.

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### (God's Future Today *Contd. from p. 4*)

From what I have identified as implications above, the leaders and animators of God's people would need to facilitate.

- repentance and radical openness to God ;
- a social or corporate critique of the status quo as it denies God's future for many ;
- corporate bearing of pain, disruption of people ; a 'public processing of pain' in the light of God's promised future ;
- envisioning the new possibilities here and now, today, in the light of God's promise and structuring the Church as an 'alternative community of God's Shalom' in the midst of human brokenness ;
- a commitment for costly and transforming action in the present.

The question is whether each of our Churches has plans and structures for the preparation of persons who are filled with the vision of God's future breaking into our today. If not, how do we meet his urgent need ?

#### A theme to challenge

*God's future today :* God's future is the future of any and every present. God is always ahead of us. Therefore God's future is the transcendent critical principle or

standard of every 'today'. God's future is the relative of all over present. At no time can we ever say we have not got it, God's future. Therefore, we always press on, making no moment absolute and submitting every present to the critique of God's judgment. Thus the theme calls us to experience God as the transcendent other in any and every present.

#### A hopeful, historical theme

*God's future today :* The hope that is affirmed in the theme is intrinsically woven with history. Hope without history is powerless, and history without hope is empty of meaning. We are warned by the theme to beware of the temptation to split hope and history. Biblical testimony calls us to a hope which is relentlessly historical and a history which is hope-filled.

The theme that the Council calls us to rally around is such a pregnant one. Its implications are many, radical and even subversive. Therefore in the words of our Chairman, Fred Kaan, in a hymn that he has specially written for the Hong Kong Council :

'at one in the Spirit  
we follow Christ's way  
and put into practice  
God's future today.'

# NEWS FROM THE DIOCESES

## JAFFNA DIOCESE (SRI LANKA)

The long cherished dream of a place of worship for the Colombo congregation of the Jaffna Diocese of the C.S.I. became a reality when on the 30th of May this year the new Church building built by this congregation at Frances Place, Wellawatte, Colombo 6 was opened and dedicated. The Synod of the C.S.I. was largely instrumental to help the Diocese to obtain the necessary funds from some of the related Mission Boards. The land and building has cost more than three million Sri Lankan rupees. The members of the congregation also made very commendable efforts of raising a substantial part of this sum. The Synod was represented at the occasion in the person of the Deputy Moderator, the Rt. Rev. Dr. P. Victor Premasagar. Bishop Premasagar declared open the Church and also preached at the Service. The Bishop of the Diocese, the Rt. Rev. D. J. Ambalavanar did the dedicatory part of the Service. Both Bishops along with the Presbyter of the Church, the Rev. J. J. Ratnarajah and the Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, the Rev. Neville Koch, Concelebrated Holy Communion. It was the Dutch Reformed Church which was gracious enough to let its own Church building for the C.S.I. congregation over the last 40 years for its worship.

The congregation now hopes to be able to raise another one and a half million Sri Lankan rupees to complete the Parsonage and the Parish Hall at the same site.

### Jaffna Diocese—Refugee Relief work

The Jaffna Diocese has been called upon in recent months to be involved very heavily in relief work in many parts of the Northern Province. For over two years now it had actively engaged both in emergence relief and also in long term rehabilitation mainly by providing houses for displaced people. The Diocese has so far completed nearly 250 houses at six different centres all within the Northern Province. It is now engaged in the construction of another 200 houses.

Particularly during the last few weeks the Diocese was called upon to help with emergency relief to hundreds of families which have been rendered refugees within the Jaffna Peninsula itself. Such emergency relief supplies are requested by the Government Agent of Jaffna and more than one of the non-Government Agencies like Churches and other independent bodies are engaged in this service. The Diocese within a fortnight since the 26th of May has provided relief in the form of dry rations worth Rs. 250 per family for more than 1,500 families. The need however is stupendous. The Diocese is doing whatever it can from grants received from donor Agencies and particularly the World Council of Churches.

## Mobile Clinics

Yet another of the new challenges that is faced by the Diocese in serving the new refugee population is to provide medical service in areas where there is no Government provision. At four different Centres in the Northern Province South of Elephant Pass the Diocesan Mission doctors led by Dr. Rohan Gunasingam run weekly free Clinics. At each of these Clinics the doctors have to cope with hundreds of patients who turn up seeking treatment. They are doing their best to be of service in a situation of desperate need.

## Day Care Centres

Yet another service provided for the new refugee colonies are the Day Care Centres set up for children between the ages of 2 and 5. These are a great blessing to the poorest of the poor in these communities. Not only do these Centres ensure that these young ones get a balanced diet but also free both parents to go for their daily work. South of Elephant Pass in the Northern Province there are now 10 new Day Care Centres all established recently. At each of these Centres there are between 60 to 80 children.

## RAYALASEEMA DIOCESE

### OBITUARY

Dr. Ebenezer Joshua Devadatta, Director, Arogyavaram Medical Centre, passed away on 11-7-1987. He is survived by his wife Sheila, a daughter and two sons.

Dr. Devadatta served in Mission hospitals all his life, in Nepal, Assam, Jammalamadagu and Arogyavaram. He was the Director of Arogyavaram Medical Centre (UMT Sanatorium) since 1980. He was an able administrator and a skilled surgeon. He led an exemplary life of compassion, love and Christian commitment, known for his meekness, patience and for bearance in the face of tremendous pressures.

We thank God for his life and witness.

Mr. B. John Prasad, Principal, Maltus Smith Junior College, Gooty, passed away on 21-7-1987. He is survived by his wife Suguna, and two sons.

Mr. John Prasad was educated in SPG High School, Nandyal, A.C. College, Guntur, and Meston Training College. He got his M.A. degree in Mathematics in the University of Virginia, USA.

He was a good teacher and an able administrator, and had a genuine love for his students and for his profession as a teacher. He was a good churchman and a dedicated lay leader in the Diocese.

We thank God for his life and witness.

—BISHOP L. V. AZARIAH

# **BOOK REVIEW**

**OPEN TO THE SPIRIT**; Editor; Colin Craston, Church House Publishing, London. £ 6.50.

*Giving Mission its Proper Place* was the title of the 1984 MISAG (Mission Issues and Strategy Advisory Group) Report to ACC-6. Within its pages were clear indications of the need across the Communion to mobilise our resources for mission more effectively. The Mission Agencies' Conference in Brisbane, Australia, in December 1986 has been one, very encouraging step in meeting that challenge. But resources for mission are not confined to finance and specialist partners from other Churches. The fundamental resource for mission is the whole people of God, lay and clergy, in the context and culture where God has placed them. If people are not energised for mission, in all its manifold aspects, it will not happen. The MISAG report indicated a widespread failure in the Communion to move from a preoccupation with maintenance and care for its own to the further commitment of proclamation and service to others. For mission, then, Christian people need to be motivated, to be given a vision of what God is doing and will do, and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Renewal of the Church in Mission is a major theme in the Lambeth 1988 programme and this book of essays on renewal is part of the preparation for that theme. The ACC 5 and ACC 6 meetings also asked for studies on the Charismatic Movement. In various parts of the Communion high claims have been made for this modern-day development as *the way of renewal*, yet, as members of the ACC have noted, the movement has led to divisiveness and theological dispute as well as church growth and a revitalised worship and ministry.

Within the Anglican heritage—not to mention other parts of the universal Church—different traditions of spirituality have flourished down the centuries. How is the way of renewal seen within each of them? Is the Holy Spirit using different ways of renewing, of motivating and empowering, God's people for mission? Have Charismatics rightly understood the implications of certain New Testament passages for today's world? Those are some of the questions to be faced. The Lambeth theme book *Open to the Spirit* offers some answers. It is a collection of essays from Anglicans (and one Methodist friend of Anglicans) across the world. The contributors are from widely differing cultures and spiritual traditions in Africa, North America, Latin America, Australia, East Asia and England.

The main aim of the book is to promote study and discussion. There has been no attempt to reach consensus. No contributor, except the editor, has seen any of the other essays. But all the writers have warmly responded to the invitation 'to encourage a loving and open conversation between members of a caring family by which all are built up and none is put down'. In his Foreword the Archbishop of Canterbury observes 'all readers will find some contributions with which they feel at home, and others that they may find unfamiliar or even unhelpful. I believe that it is the second category to which they should devote most attention'. The Archbishop further reminds us that any turning inwards to look at ourselves should only be a prelude to turning outwards more effectively to the world. The book will have fulfilled its purpose if it proves an aid to thought and prayer for the Renewal of the Church in Mission.

THE REV. CANON COLIN CRASTON

Mission and Dialogue.....(Contd. from p. 10)

disciples to Emmaus. That is why we feel that Christian art in Asia is not just church decoration, but a statement of faith in a community which seeks for Gospel commitment outside the narrow parameters of historically conditioned church institutions.

One of the most imaginative aspects of the study conference was the exposure visits programme. Rather than speculate in abstraction on the religious phenomena we are surrounded with, the programme made for direct contacts with the religious life and structures of other faiths achieving thereby a refreshing and provocative sense of immediacy. The participants visited the Zoroastrian Centre in Bangalore where Ervad Nadirshan P. Unvalla, the *mobed* of the Parsi Fire Temple explained and answered many questions from the participants. There was a visit to the Ramakrishna Ashram *mutt* where the participants spent one hour discussing the message and the humanitarian work of the Mission with Swami Abhiramananda as well as spent time in attending a *bhajan* session on one evening. There were visits to the Bahai Centre, the local Gurudwara and a mosque in the nearby Kadugodi village and to the famous Satya Sai Baba Ashram at Whitefield. There were several opportunities for the participants to engage in a frank and first hand experience of dialogue with people of living faiths at these places. There was also a visit to the National Biblical Catechetical and Liturgical Centre at Bangalore where the participants joined the *bhajan* session and the inculturated eucharistic celebration in a uniquely Indian manner. The participants were also addressed by Ms. Susy Nellithanam, the Director of the Ecumenical Christian Centre, and were welcomed by her and the other staff of the Centre. She explained to the participants about the Centre's involvement in mission and dialogue. In all these places it was possible to experience great openness and spontaneous interaction on religious and social levels. In the feedback sessions after each of these exposure visits the participants raised a whole range of inter-religious issues and made some penetrating observations.

The participants agreed on the point that interfaith dialogue is not polemics or debating on religious matters but it is thoroughly biblical as God took the initiative in Jesus Christ to dwell with humanity. Dialogue is not a substitute for mission, neither does it replace mission. There was a lively discussion whether an image, theological formulation, physical or artistic can be a final image of Jesus Christ. There was discussion also on the sacraments and liturgical symbolism.

Each of the participants felt that interfaith dialogue is an urgent issue which needs the attention of every dynamic local congregation. It was decided that each participant would initiate programmes of interfaith dialogue in his own congregation according to the circumstances and opportunities available to him. They also articulated the view that there is a need to produce study and resource materials on this subject in the Church. The pastors should conscientise the congregations about this concern through sermons and other programmes.

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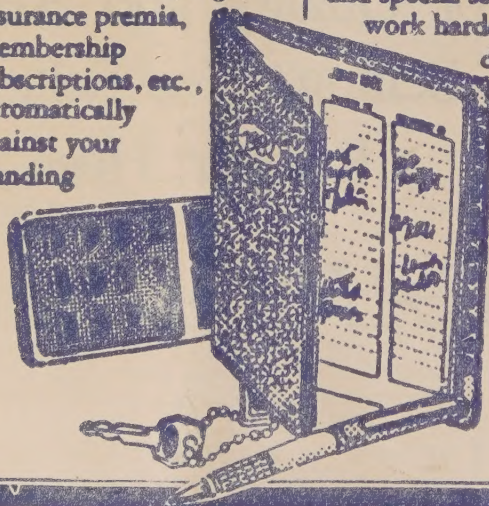
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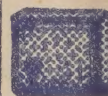
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